ARTHĀPATTI AS A *PRAMĀṆA*: A DEFENCE

SYNOPSIS

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Synopsis

1. The title of the proposed thesis:

"Arthāpatti as a pramāṇa: A Defence".

2. Statement of the Problem:

The objective of this proposed research project is to analyse and examine *arthāpatti* (presumption) as a *pramāṇa* (instrument of valid cognition). The existence of all things in this organism is divided into two-fold viz. instrument of cognition *(pramāṇa)* and objects of cognition *(prameya)* - *"mānameyabibhāgena bastūnāṁ dvibidhā sthitiḥ"*[1]. Over and above these two there is nothing. The concept of *pramā* and *prameya* are closely connected. No cognition can be attained without *pramāṇa* that is why *pramāṇa* plays an important role in the field of epistemology.

Among the Indian philosophers, Mīmāṁsakas (both Prābhākara and Bhāṭṭa) and Advaita Vedāntins, on the one hand, accept presumption (*arthāpatti*) as an independent instrument of valid cognition; but Naiyāyika and Sāṁkhya philosophers, on the other, reduce presumption to *keval-vyatireki anumāna* (inference). The Nyāya school admits three sorts of inference viz. *kevalānvayi, kevala-vyatireki* and *anvaya-vyatireki*. Presumption according to this school belongs to the second sort of inference.

The word *'arthāpatti'* is derived from the words *'artha'* and *'āpatti'*. The meaning of *'artha'* is real object (fact), and *'āpatti'* means imagination *(kalpanā)*. *Arthāpatti* is an assumption of something to resolve a contradiction. Śabara, commentator of *Mīmāṁsā-Sūtra,* gives a definition of *arthāpatti* as,

> "The presumption of something not seen on the ground that a fact already perceived or heard would not be possible without that presumption; for instance, it is found that Devadatta who is alive is not in the house, and this

[1] Bhatta, Nārāyaṇa. *Mānameyodaya,* Sridinanath Tripathi Nabatirtha (Ed.), Vol II, Sanskrit College, Kolkata, 1989, p. 1. [Henceforth *Mānameyodaya*]

non-existence in the house leads to the presumption that he is somewhere outside the house".[2]

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in his *Mānameyodaya* says that "When something is otherwise unintelligible, the assumption of what will make it intelligible is presumption: this alone is the definition as given in the Bhāṣya."[3] When it is known that Devadatta is alive, but he is not in house, then some sort of inconsistency arises. This inconsistency can be resolved if we assume that he is outside. This type of assumption is called *arthāpatti* (presumption). Actually, the conflict between two instruments of valid cognition is called presumption. Here, two instruments of valid cognition are: one is the general instrument of valid cognition and another is the specific instrument of valid cognition. When something is assumed for removal of such type of conflict is called presumption. In the aforesaid example, Devadatta is alive is known by the general instrument of valid cognition, i.e. inference and the absence of Devadatta in the house is known by the specific instrument of valid cognition i.e. non-apprehension. Devadatta's aliveness is general in the sense that there is no specific place where Devadatta exists. Here, 'exist' means either in house or in outside of house. But, his absence in the house is known through the non-apprehension. In that situation, the conflict between inference and non-apprehension leads to the presumption that Devadatta is outside the house. Reconciliation of the conflict is possible by this presumption. So, the uncommon causal condition for the cognition of presumption is the conflict between two instruments of valid cognition. Though, the two instruments of valid cognition are not specific, because if they are specific then the reconciliation will be impossible.

Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṁsakas holds two sorts of *arthāpatti*, viz. *dṛṣṭārthāpatti* or presumption from the seen and *śrutārthāpatti* or presumption from the heard.[4] But, Śabara has given only one example of presumption. As Śabara has given only one example, some philosophers are of the opinion that he has admitted only one kind of presumption. But I think that this observation is not wise. From what he says in his *Bhāṣya ('dṛṣṭaḥ śruto vā')*, it is clear that he has admitted two kinds of presumptions. I think Kumārila rightly understood this and clearly states that Śabara admits two kinds of presumption already mentioned.

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[2] *"arthāpattirapi dṛṣṭaḥ śruto bā artho'anyathā nopapadyate ityarthakalpanā. yathā jībati Debdatte gṛhāvābadarśanena bahirvābsyādṛṣṭasya kalpanā." Mīmāṁsā-Sūtra-Bhāṣya*, 1-1-5.

[3] *"anyathānupapattyā yadupapādakakalpanam / tadarthāpattirityebaṁ lakṣaṇaṁ bhāṣyabhāṣitam." Mānameyodaya*, P. 120.

[4] *"dṛṣṭaḥ śruto vā".*

Prabhākara says in his commentary *Bṛhati* that presumption is the assumption of a fact for explaining another fact to reconcile their conflict. The word 'conflict' means the impossibility of the existence of a thing without another thing. If this is the case, then, it can easily be said that presumption is nothing but the inference of a cause from its effect, as the existence of an effect cannot be possible without its cause. Thus, it is seen that presumption is not a different instrument of valid cognition other than inference. But, the presumption is different from inference in the sense that in inference the conclusion is derived from the invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*), while in presumption there is not any cognition of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*). Furthermore, Prabhākara says that, whatever is the case of presumption it is the reverse of the inference. We can illustrate this view like that: the movement of thought is from the *anupapanna* to the *upapādaka* for the case of inference, while in the case of presumption the movement of thought is from the *upapādaka* to the *anupapanna*.

Advaita Vedānta accepts presumption *(arthāpatti)* as an instrument of valid cognition to explain the *Vedāntic* texts. For example, the *Upaniṣadas* describe the creation of this world with the help of *Brahman* and again say that *Brahman* is alone real. This inconsistency is resolved by assuming that the creation of this world is not real, but apparent *(vivarta)* as shell appears as silver. Here, Advaita Vedāntin assumes the existence of *māyā* as the power of *Brahman* for resolving such conflict and such type of assumption is called Presumption *(arthāpatti) – "idānīmarthāpattinirūpyate"*.[5]

Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra gives the definition of presumption *(arthāpatti)* as 'the assumption of an explanatory fact *(upapādaka)* from a knowledge of the thing to be explained *(upapādya) – "tatropapādya-jňānenopapādaka-kalpanamarthāpatti"*.[6] Here, the cognition of the seen facts is the instrument and the cognition of the unseen or assumed fact is the result. *Upapādya* is one which cannot be explained without assuming another fact. The fact which is assumed to explain *upapādya* is known as *upapādaka*. We may explain this with the help of an example. The stoutness of a man who does not eat at day *('pīno Devadatta divā na bhūňkte')* is inexplicable without the assumption of his eating at night. One who does not eat both day and night cannot be stout. Here, the stoutness of such man in

[5] Adhvarīndra, Dharmarājā. *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*, Panchanan Bhattacharya (Tr. & Elucd.), Srinath Bhavan, Contai, Medinipur, 1377 (BN), p. 214.

[6] Ibid., p. 214.

the absence of eating at day is called *upapādya* and the presumption of eating at night is called *upapādaka*. So, the assumption of an explanatory fact from an unexplained fact is called presumption *(arthāpatti)*.

Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra mentions two sorts of presumption like Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, viz. presumption from the seen *(dṛṣṭārthāpatti)* and presumption from the heard *(śrutārthāpatti)*. Presumption which is based on instrument of valid cognition other than testimony is called *dṛṣṭārthāpatti*. Suppose, one wrongly perceives that 'this is silver' *(idaṁ rajataṁ)* in a place and subsequently he again perceives that 'this is not silver' *(nedaṁ rajataṁ)*. The second perception denies the first one. If the silver is taken as real, then the fact of denial cannot be explained. From this, one can assume that the first cognition of silver is false. This type of presumption is the example of *dṛṣṭārthāpatti*.

The presumption for resolving the conflict of any sentence which is heard is called *śrutārthāpatti*, e.g. the scriptural statement '*tarati śokam ātmavit*'[7] (the knower of self transcends grief) i.e. knowledge is the cause of making one free from bondage. But, the question arises: if the bondage is the real one, then how one can free from bondage through the help of knowledge? To avoid such conflict the hearer assumes that bondage is not real, but illusory; and such type of assumption is not possible without the help of presumption i.e. *śrutārthāpatti*.

According to Naiyāyikas, presumption *(arthāpatti)* cannot be recognized as an independent instrument of valid cognition *(pramāṇa)*, it is actually nothing but a case of inference *(anumāna)* i.e. *vyatireki inference*. Vācaspati like the Naiyāyika also thinks that presumption should be treated as a case of inference. Vācaspati Miśra in his commentary called *Sāṁkhya-Tattvakaumudī*, explain the Sāṁkhya views in this regard. According to him, Devadatta is a spatio-temporary limited being. It's the general rule of an object that, which is limited by space and time that the absence of it in a certain place implies the presence of the same in the other place. Our body is the living example of this type of object. In this case, the relation of invariable concomitance which is otherwise called *vyāpti* can easily be established. The very form of this invariable concomitance stands as,

> 'If an object is absent in a place at a particular time, then that object must be present in another place at that time'.

[7] *Chāndogya Upaniṣada*, VII, i.3.

This rule is equally true in the case of Devadatta, since he is a person confined within a particular place and time. More clearly, to say, the absence of Devadatta in a certain house at a particular time necessarily implies the presence of his at a certain place outside the house at the same time. Thus, it is seen that the cognition of the presence of Devadatta's outside from house is attained through inference, but not through any other instrument of cognition called presumption. The Sāṁkhya philosophers hold that this inference can be formulated in the following way:

> 'Devadatta is outside the house, because he is alive and absent from the house'.

The person who are alive and absent from the house are somewhere other than the house, like me. Thus, it is shown that the instrument of cognition called presumption can very well be reduced to inference.

This view of the Sāṁkhya has been countered by the Prābhākara Mīmāṁsakas. They argue that in the example in question aliveness accompany by the absence from the house stands for probans, but in fact this type of probans cannot be genuine one. By the very definition probans is something which is already known. If the aliveness of Devadatta is taken as the probans that is already known, then the question comes what is the instrument by which the aliveness of Devadatta is known. Here, perception cannot be the instrument through which it can be known that Devadatta is alive, because we can perceive neither the non-existence of Devadatta in the house nor existence of Devadatta outside the house. Therefore, in order to establish the fact that Devadatta is alive, we have resolved to an instrument of valid cognition other than perception.

Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra says that if presumption be an inference at all it must be of the *vyatireki* type (agreement of difference). But, *vyatireki* inference, he shows, is not a case of inference in the true sense of the term and therefore for the same reason presumption also cannot be recognized as a case of inference proper. It is important to note that Naiyāyika reduces presumption to the *keval-vyatireki* type of inference. Both of the instances of presumption already mentioned can be rendered in the *keval-vyatireki* form in the following way. The argument that the man who does not take food in the day time and yet remains stout must eat at night, may be rendered in the form:

‘No case of absence of eating at night while fasting by day is a case of stoutness.

This is a case of stoutness.

Therefore, this is not a case of absence of eating at night while fasting by day, i.e. this is a case of night-eating’.

Likewise, the instance of presumption given by the Mīmāṁsakas that Devadatta is alive and yet not at home, he must be outside may be put into the form:

‘No case of absence of a man outside home, while he is not also at home, is a case of his being alive.

Devadatta is alive.

Therefore, he is not absent outside home while he is not at home i.e. he is outside home’.

It is seen that presumption is nothing but a case of inference as it is held by the Naiyāyikas. In order to overcome this problem the Advaitin has restored with the help of his allies the Mīmāṁsakas, specially the Bhāṭṭa. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa accompanied by his followers has produced a number of sound arguments to substantiate the position that presumption is an independent and separate instrument of valid cognition. The Bhāṭṭa thinkers mention that sometimes contradiction arises in our mind and in order to resolve this contradiction we take the help of presumption. Going back to the well-known examples of presumption already mentioned, we fall in contradiction when we cannot find Devadatta at home and when we know through some authentic source that ‘he is alive’. Here, this contradiction is not resolved unless and until we assume that ‘he is outside’. Likewise, conflict arises between the cognition that a man does not eat by day time and his stout. This contradiction can be resolved only through the presumption of the fact that ‘he is eating at night’. Here, the very assumption in both of the cases is justified and is a valid piece of cognition, simply because of the fact that the two events between which there is apparent conflict are known to be certain, and again it is only the assume facts through which the conflict can be resolved.

3. A brief overview of literature in the area of the proposal:

a) Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa in his *Mānameyodaya* has dealt a brief overview on *arthāpatti* as a *pramāṇa* after Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta schools and established the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṁsakas position.

b) Dharmarājā Adhvarīndra has discussed on *arthāpatti pramāṇā* and established the Advaita Vedātin views in his *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*. Also D. M. Dutta has written the book *The Six Ways of Knowing* based on *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā*.

c) The great sage Gautama in his *Nyāya-Sūtra* has mentioned on *arthāpatti pramāṇa* and reduced it into inference in the verse 2-2-2.

d) Vācaspati Miśra in his *Sāṁkhyatattvakaumidī* has dealt on *arthāpatti* and reduced it into *vyatireka anumāna* which is well known in Sāṁkhya school as *avīta anumāna*.

e) Kumārila Bhaṭṭa has discussed on *arthāpatti* as a pramāṇa in his *Ślokavārtika*.

f) S. C. Chatterjee has briefly discussed on presumption (*arthāpatti*) in his *The Nyāya Theory of Knowledge* from Nyāya position.

4. The conceptual frame work:

What we have noticed from the above is that the Mīmāṁsā and the Advaita Vedānta schools do not accept *kevala-vyatireki* (only of agreement in absence) inference. So, as there is no room for *kevala-vyatireki* (only of agreement in absence) inference in the philosophy of Mīmāṁsā and Advaita Vedānta, and again as presumption according to Nyāya school can be reduced only to *kevala-vyatireki* (only of agreement in absence) inference; it implies that presumption cannot be reduced to inference. That is why they argue that presumption (*arthāpatti*) is an independent instrument of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). The Nyāya school has offered another argument, i.e. the argument of logical economy (*lāghava*) to show that presumption should be reduced to *keval-vyatireki* inference. Also, Sāṁkhya school has reduced *arthāpatti* into inference which is well known as *avīta anumāna* in this school. In this way a long controversy arises between the Nyāya and Sāṁkhya Schools on the one hand, and the Mīmāṁsā and the Advaita Vedānta schools on the other. I shall make a humble attempt to examine and assess with a critical outlook on *arthāpatti* whether a *pramāṇa or not*. Though one of the important point is that Naiyāyika and Sāṁkhya schools are accepted the cognition of *arthāpatti* (presumption), yet they do not admit presumption as an independent instrument of valid cognition[8]. A careful analysis will compile about their views regarding the status of presumption in my thesis.

[8] "śabda aituhyānarthāntarbhābādnumāne'rthāpattisambhabābhābānarthāntarbhābāccā - pratiṣedhaḥ." *Nyāya-sūtra*, 2-2-2.

5. Research questions and hypothesis:

Most of the Indian philosophers agree that there is no dispute on the cognition which originates from *arthāpatti* as claimed by Mīmāṁsakas and Advaita Vedāntins is case of valid cognition. The only controversy is regarding the instrument of that valid cognition. So, all philosophers admit the *pramā*, but they are not coequal on *pramāṇa*. I shall try to crop up the following questions in my proposed thesis:

i. Which definition of *karaṇa* is tenable for the sake of *arthāpatti*?
ii. Which form of *vyāpti* is assess with *keval-vyatireki anumāna*?
iii. Is it a wise method to take the path of logical economy or law of parsimony (*lāghava*) at the cost of truth?
iv. Can we formulate the examples like '*tarati śokam ātmavit*' (the knower of self transcends grief) or '*dvāraṁ pidhehi*' (close the door) from the word '*dvāraṁ*' into *keval-vyatireki inference*?
v. Advaita Vedāntin explains the reality of the world by the help of *māyā*. But, if the *Brahman* is only truth, then how can the cognition of *māyā* possible?

6. Proposed Chapterisation:

a. Chapter I: **Introduction.**
b. Chapter II: ***Arthāpatti* in Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṁsā school.**
c. Chapter III: ***Arthāpatti* in Prābhākara Mīmāṁsā school.**
d. Chapter IV: ***Arthāpatti* in Advaita Vedānta school.**
e. Chapter V: **A Nyāya Critique on *arthāpatti*.**
f. Chapter VI: **A Sāṁkhya Critique on *arthāpatti*.**
g. Chapter VII: **Concluding and Critical Remarks.**

7. Proposed Bibliography:

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